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Federal University of Rio de Janeiro State

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## RESEARCH

### A formação pedagógica de alunos nos mestrados profissionais

The pedagogical training of students in professional master's degree programs

La formación pedagógica de los alumnos en las maestrías profesionales

Cláudia Mara de Melo Tavares <sup>1</sup>, Paulo Pires de Queiroz <sup>2</sup>

#### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** To discuss the pedagogical training of students within the professional master. **Method:** This is a theoretical reflection on the pedagogical training of the professional master in the contemporary world. One wonders about the knowledge related to this training from a reflective perspective of the profession. **Results:** We highlight the knowledge present in the training, the elements of teacher training, professional master; development processes in teacher training and the importance of teaching content in the formation of the professional teacher. **Conclusion:** It is understood that the pedagogical training of students of Masters Professionals requires contextualization of professional acts, understanding the uniqueness of situations from different perspectives of knowledge and aims to educate these masters as critical intellectuals able to ratify the discourse and practice of freedom and democracy. **Descriptors:** Education graduate, Education professional, Educational measurement, Professional practice, Higher education policy.

#### RESUMO

**Objetivo:** Discutir a formação pedagógica de alunos no âmbito dos mestrados profissionais. **Método:** Trata-se de uma reflexão teórica sobre a formação pedagógica do mestre profissional no mundo contemporâneo. Indaga-se sobre os saberes relacionados a esta formação a partir de uma perspectiva reflexiva da profissão. **Resultados:** Destacam-se os saberes presentes na formação profissional; os elementos da formação pedagógica do mestre profissional; os processos de desenvolvimento na formação pedagógica e a importância dos conteúdos pedagógicos na formação do mestre profissional. **Conclusão:** Compreende-se que a formação pedagógica dos alunos dos Mestrados Profissionais exige a contextualização de atos profissionais, a compreensão da singularidade das situações a partir de diferentes perspectivas de conhecimento e visa educar esses mestrados como intelectuais críticos capazes de ratificar e praticar o discurso da liberdade e da democracia. **Descritores:** Educação de Pós-Graduação, Educação Profissionalizante, Avaliação Educacional, Prática Profissional, Política de Educação Superior.

#### RESUMEN

**Objetivo:** Discutir la formación pedagógica de los estudiantes dentro de la maestría profesional. **Método:** Se trata de una reflexión teórica sobre la formación pedagógica del maestro profesional en el mundo contemporáneo. Uno se pregunta acerca de los conocimientos relacionados con esta capacitación desde una perspectiva reflexiva de la profesión. **Resultados:** Se destaca el conocimiento presente en el entrenamiento, los elementos de la formación del profesorado, master profesional, los procesos de desarrollo en la formación docente y la importancia del contenido de la enseñanza en la formación del profesional de los maestros. **Conclusión:** Se entiende que la formación pedagógica de los estudiantes de Masters Profesionales requiere contextualización de los actos profesionales, la comprensión de la singularidad de las situaciones desde diferentes perspectivas de conocimiento y tiene como objetivo educar a estos maestros como intelectuales críticos capaces de ratificar el discurso y la práctica de la libertad y la democracia. **Descriptores:** Educación de Postgrado, Educación Profesional, Evaluación Educacional, Práctica Profesional, Política de Educación Superior.

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## INTRODUCTION

**T**he radical and accelerated transformations that shake the world and mankind in the present day have a factor in common that is increasingly central to all productive activities, material and immaterial: the knowledge. This reflection aims to discuss the pedagogical training of students under professional master's degree programs understanding that the pedagogy is a science that has as its object of study, the education. As a social phenomenon, education does not end with the study of a single science. As a multiple phenomenon, it is the synthesis of multiple determinations. Thus, it requires the plurality of approaches. Approaches which, in addition to the discourses produced about the real, to them it turn permanently with the question about its potential and limits to be understood. And, consequently, from new demands of reality, they review themselves.

The study of the social practice of education requires skills that enable new ways of understanding the real and its complexity. Pedagogy and other educational sciences are responsible for producing these new modes. It is no longer possible to educate, train, and teach only with the knowledge (of areas of knowledge) and the know-how (technical/technological). The contextualization of all acts is necessary, with its multiple determinants, the realization that the uniqueness of situations requires philosophical, historical, sociological, and psychological perspectives, etc. Perspectives are what it could be called a *professional culture of action*, namely, that allows clear vision and gives meaning to actions.

The professional master's degree program was created in Brazil as a way of easing the Strictu Sensu Post-graduate education model generating a lot of controversy in academia including: the self-financed nature, the construction of knowledge coupled to practice, and training of qualified human resources for the non-academic market. The Professional Master's degree program is a training modality that, from a discipline field of knowledge, seeks to confront a problem proposed by the professional field of the student's performance and his work routine, proposing new solutions and paths from the scientific, technological, and innovative bases rather than the teaching of specialized techniques.<sup>1</sup> We understand that Professional Master's degree programs advance in the dynamics of integration theory and practice as a way of overcoming the traditional training modes distanced from the real-world scenarios. However, the mere approximation with the practice does not guarantee that this will be reflective or that will promote innovation in the professional field.

When we propose to reflect about the pedagogical training of students within professional master's degree programs, we realize that the quantitative growth of educational systems has not matched the formative results (qualitative) suitable to the demands of the population involved in the contemporary world, nor the requirements of social demands. Therefore, this puts the importance of this discussion on the agenda.

Although the assessment programs to which these programs are submitted are pointed as factors that contribute significantly to the advancement of graduate schools in Brazil, these evaluations give preference to scientific production and flow of titling, leaving aside the pedagogical training of students.<sup>2</sup> We understand that Professional Master's degree programs, while being the place for the elaboration of knowledge, must not lose the sense of a teacher's education articulated to the formation of a researcher.

Thus, the question is: what knowledge is related to the pedagogical training of students under professional master's degree programs? We believe that the possible answers to this guiding question will be concatenated to the knowledge of experience, of knowledge, and of pedagogical knowledge.<sup>3</sup>

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Students arrive at Professional Master's degree programs as holders of knowledge that have been seized in the course of their life trajectories. Experiences that allow them to say which were the good teachers in the past, which were good on content and not on didactics, and which were significant in their lives. The challenge posed to Professional Master's degree programs is to collaborate in the process of passage of students aiming to concatenate theory to practice with the purpose of professional emancipation of those who seek this teaching modality.

On another level, the knowledge of experience are also those that these students produce in their professional life, in a permanent process of reflection about their practices, mediated by other coworkers, texts produced by other experts. That is where processes of reflection on their own practices and development of practical research skills gain importance in the pedagogical training of these students.

With respect to knowledge, the students attend Professional Master's degree programs at the end of their respective graduations. Generally speaking, they are clear about being professionals from different areas of knowledge. However, few have ever wondered what is the meaning of this knowledge for themselves; what is the meaning of that knowledge in contemporary society; what is the difference between knowledge and information; to what extent knowledge is power; what is the role of knowledge in the world of work; and what is the relationship between science and material production?

Using the collaboration of Edgar Morin<sup>4</sup>, knowledge cannot be reduced to information. This is the first stage of that the former. To acquire knowledge implies a second stage: to work with the information by sorting, analyzing, and contextualizing them. The third stage has to do with intelligence, consciousness, or wisdom. Intelligence has to do with the art of linking knowledge in a relevant and useful manner, that is, to produce new forms of progress and development; conscience and wisdom involves reflection, i.e., ability to produce new forms of existence, of humanization. And it is in this plot that one can understand the relationship between knowledge and power. The information gives advantages to who has it, or societies would not set against the disclosure of information,



neither would manipulate them. Access to information is not equal to all citizens. Therefore, it is necessary to inform and work the information to build intelligence. Conversely, the intelligence may be blind and this affects the power of knowledge because power is not intrinsic to those who produce knowledge, but to those who control knowledge producers. We believe that an enormous power flows from knowledge, but not from those who produce it. Therefore, it is not enough to produce knowledge, but it is necessary to produce the conditions for the production of knowledge. In other words, knowing means being aware of the power of knowledge for the production of the material, social, and existential life for the mankind.

Pedagogical training of students under Professional master's degree programs contain extremely important elements such as questioning, intentionality to find solutions, methodological experimentation, and facing complex situations in different contexts of professional performance. Knowledge of pedagogical training can collaborate with practice. Especially if they are mobilized from problems created in the practice considering the dependence of the theory in relation to the practice because the latter comes first. This first hand period, however, assumes an intimate connection with the theory far from implying a contraposition in relation to the absolute theory. One of the most important aspects of Professional Master's degree programs arises from this perspective: the study and systematic investigation on the part of professionals about their own practices with the contribution of the theory to understand all study design and research.

To take ownership of these knowledge, students of a Professional Master's degree program acquires new attitudes that modify their own experiences during daily work. The work becomes a ritual, a game, a discipline, an apprenticeship, even an art, as their perception changes. The tension of the boredom and of the unknown, the two causes of work-related suffering, are transformed.

The tension of the unknown is transformed by an attitude of confidence and patience. When we learn that separation and reordering constitute the nature of things, we suffer less anxiety about the need to change the way of working, the development of a new product, the acquisition of a new skill, and the organization of a new task. The need to innovate becomes a challenge, not a threat.

Considering the proposed aspects in our first moment of reflection, we question: How do students under Professional Master's degree programs reflect in action, about the action, and about the reflection in action? We believe in the possible articulation between research and policy formation and, in this direction, in new investigative trends about pedagogical training valuing the reflective professional.

The reflective professional<sup>5,6</sup> opposes the technical rationality and is understood as a subject/ intellectual in a permanent process of training. As such, to think about his formation means to think about it as a *continuum* of the initial and ongoing formation. He also understands that the training is, in fact, self-training, once these professionals re-elaborate common initial knowledge in confrontation with their practical daily experiences experienced in work contexts. It is in that clash and in a collective process of exchanging experiences and practices that professionals continue building their knowledge as *praticum*, i.e., that which constantly reflects on and about the practice.

Nóvoa <sup>7</sup> points to the importance of the triple motion suggested by Shön, of reflection on action, reflection on the action, and reflection on the reflection in action as constituent of the professional, understood as autonomous and/or emancipated, in the professional centered perspective, opposed to the technical rationality understood as mere implementation of values, norms, guidelines, and curricular policy decisions. Using the collaborations of several authors in their investigations in different countries, Nóvoa proposes the formation based on a critical-reflexive perspective that provides training professionals with the means of autonomous thinking that facilitates the training dynamics of self-participation. Hence the importance of considering three processes in pedagogical training of this professional student under the Professional master's degree program:

1. Personal development;
2. Professional development;
3. Organizational development.

Personal development implies valuing, as contents of their training, critical-reflexive work about the practices that they perform, and on shared experiences. Thus, we understand that the theory provides clues and reading keys, however, what adults retain is linked to their experience. However, that does not mean staying at the level of individual knowledge. The formation is always by the mobilization of various types of knowledge, with specific knowledge that are not unique, in the sense that it does not compose a finished body of knowledge because the problems of professional practice are not merely instrumental but involve problematic situations that require decisions in a field of great complexity, uncertainty, singularity, and with conflict of values.

Professional development is presented under a perspective that connotes a new paradigm on professional training. The training of reflective professionals comprises an emancipatory human project. The development of studies on this tendency implies political-educational positions betting on professionals as authors of the social practice. Thus, Professional Master's degree programs offered in Brazil need to be re-created as counter publics' settings <sup>8</sup> to offer professional training with social conscience and sensitivity. Therefore, to educate these master's degree students as critical intellectuals able to ratify and practice the speech of freedom and democracy is no easy and simple task; however, it is a proposal that carries a good chance.

The training of professionals in the reflexive trend is configured as a policy of valorization of the personal-professional development and of the organizations where these professionals act because they assume working conditions that encourage the permanent training of these professionals in the workplace, in networks of self-training, and in partnership with other training organizations. Working the knowledge on the dynamics of a multimedia society, with globalization, multiculturalism, and productive market transformations, and in the training of graduate students requires permanent training, understood as the re-assignment of meaning of the identity of these professionals.

The systematized reflections in this second moment of our reflection feature an introductory character, of course. Monitoring master's degree students with the use of debates and discussions consolidates new knowledge about the processes of identity and construction of pedagogical knowledge in their professional practices. All social practice is

determined by a set of forces, degree of awareness of its actors, the worldview that guides them, and the context where this practice develops and is operationalized.

The everyday life of any practical professional depends on the tacit knowledge that mobilizes and elaborates during his own action. Under the pressure of multiple and simultaneous requests from the professional life, the professional activates his intellectual resources in the broadest sense of the word (concepts, theories, beliefs, data, procedures, techniques) to draw up a quick diagnosis of the situation, design intervention strategies, and predict the future course of events.

In an attempt to draw up the last moment of this reflection, we will seek to understand the importance of teaching pedagogical contents in pedagogical training of students under Professional Master's degree programs. It is in the mobilization of these contents that professionals find the benchmark to develop the ability to investigate their own activity and, from it, build and transform their knowledge-making in a permanent process of construction of their professional identities.

To seek to understand the importance of pedagogical contents in the training of students in Professional Master's degree programs is to identify such contents as qualified interaction tools that are related to all operations that aim to promote reflection on the part of these students.

It is from the understanding of that nature that we are trying to produce whether through the pedagogical paradigm, whether on the action of teachers and students as skilled intellectuals that it becomes possible to address and discuss the problems of the development of reflection on the part of students/master degree students as the core educational purpose. Even though this purpose cannot be exhausted in a debate on the evaluation of the question we raised about the importance of pedagogical contents in the training of graduate students under Professional Master's degree programs, it is recognizable that the raising of this question clearly brings up the need for a more complex assessment around the proposed issue.

To evaluate is to create conditions where master's degree students can reflect on their academic/professional performances and, subsequently, on the different types of relationships that are established within Professional Master's degree programs where they are located in order to make decisions and take on commitments. The criteria of assessment and its construction is one of the most decisive operations of educational initiatives that build under the aegis of the pedagogical paradigm.

More than to rank educational contents as important in the training of graduate students under Professional Master's degree programs, is to verify that the criteria raised to defend the permanence of these contents in the formation of these students/master's degree students provide an assessment that stated, in particular, as a time of reflection that is consolidated by functionality and occur in the collective, mediated by criteria that contribute to such reflection and is understood as a moment pertinent to the training. As it turns out, the definition of evaluation criteria is not a peripheral issue in the context of an educational activity that aims to take over as a qualified dialogue action. Such definition must be understood in the light of the set of assumptions, challenges, and requirements that we have come to characterize as contributions to the pedagogical paradigm configuration.



The reflection to produce the senses and nature of the pedagogical contents in the training of graduate students under Professional Master's degree programs will have to be developed around the type of relationships that are established between the structuring poles in presence within the framework of educational action (Programs, Teachers, Students, and Knowledge) and not on the basis of the attempt to identify which of these structuring poles is the most decisive pole to leverage that same action. This shift in the field of structuring poles of pedagogical relationships for the appreciation of the dynamics and tensions that allow this relationship to happen, results from the fact of knowing that the meanings we attach to things, facts, and events are not generated from inside the mind but from the dialogue that someone has the opportunity to establish with the cultural heritage that, today, we have at our disposal, and with other human beings that assume a decisive role as regulatory elements for the support and dialogue within the framework of this dialogue.

It is from these assumptions that the teacher's role is configured as a qualified interlocutor, like someone who has personal and cultural conditions to support actively and intentionally the process of the personal and social education of his students, not doing for them what they shall do, but not leaving them aimlessly and without support.

## CONCLUSION

This critical reflection on pedagogical training under Professional Master's degree programs discussed from the critical-reflexive perspective of education, the elements for the pedagogical training of master's degree students within an emancipating vision.

It is understandable that the pedagogical training of the students under Professional Master's degree programs in contemporary times requires the contextualization of professional acts and an understanding of the uniqueness of the situations from different perspectives of knowledge. Therefore, they gain importance in the reflection processes on the practice and development of research skills.

The pedagogical training of students under Professional master's degree programs contain important elements, such as questioning, intentionality to find solutions, methodological experimentation, and the facing of complex situations in different contexts of professional performance. Knowledge of pedagogical training can collaborate with the professional practice of Professional Master's degree students, especially if they are mobilized from problems that the practice creates.

Opposed to technical rationality, understood as mere implementation of values, norms, guidelines, and political-curriculum decisions, the reflexive training in Professional Master's degree programs points to the importance of reflection in action, reflection on the action, and reflection on the reflection in action as constituent of the professional, understood as autonomous and/or emancipated.



Finally, we recognize that the pedagogical contents constitute qualified interlocution teaching tools in the pedagogical training of students under Professional Master's degree programs and keep the relationship with operations that aim to promote reflection on the part of these students.

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